

TRAVELLERS' LETTERS.

I had a most glorious time in Canada, and saw a lot in the short time. I sailed on the 6th of August, and landed at Quebec on the 15th. We had had a delightful passage; and who do you think I met on board, and who also happened to be in the same cabin? Miss Moore. You will all remember her. We were delighted to meet. She was much the same as ever. I saw a good deal of her at the beginning, but afterwards she turned out to be a bad sailor, and had to stay down below a good deal. She was going out for a few months to stay with her brother, who is farming near Winnipeg. Quebec is a dear old-world city, with enormously steep streets. The people are mostly French. I was fortunate in being invited to a ball given by the Governor-General at the Citadel, which is on a steep cliff overlooking the St. Lawrence, which, by the way, is grand beyond our insular conception. The Citadel carried me back to the days of Wolfe and Montcalm and other historical personages. I then went up the New Brunswick coast for about 400 miles, where the railway runs through countless miles of never-ending forest. The maple tree is of course a great feature in the woods, and the leaves were all turning a most brilliant red when I saw them. From there I went to Toronto, a journey of about 1000 miles. I hate the night travelling on the Canadian and American trains. They have long carriages, or "cars" as they call them, to hold about forty people, who sleep in berths one over the other, separated only by curtains, and men and women are all mixed up. You have to dress and undress as best you can upon the beds, and you meet people on the way to the washing room in all garbs and attire. I did not sleep a wink the first night, but afterwards got quite used to it. Toronto is a beautifully clean city, with a very interesting University. From there I went to see Niagara, which, of course, is grand beyond description—most awesome in fact. I think Niagara river astonished me more than the Falls. Some of the

waves are 40 feet high, and it rushes down for miles below the falls in a seething mass of white-foamed whirlpools and rapids. The water itself is a beautiful green. I was most fortunate in having friends to stay with wherever I went. My next port of call was Chicago, a huge, filthy city, with two redeeming features—the lake, and its parks and boulevards. The latter stretch for 32 miles along the shores of Lake Michigan. I do *not* like the Americans, and was glad to go back to Canada and the Canadians, who are such thoroughly charming people. I then went to Montreal, where I spent ten days, the longest time I had been anywhere. I never met with so much hospitality in my life as I did there. Simply because I was an English girl, I was inundated with invitations, and had a thoroughly good time generally. If ever I go back, Montreal is certainly the city which I should choose to live in. The people are absolutely charming and so unconventional, it was quite refreshing. I sailed for home on the 25th of September, and I must confess that I was very sorry to sight the Irish Coast on October 3rd. I had had the best time of my life, and it was depressing to think of work! However, I started at once with only a day's respite, and I am now quite settled down again to a work-a-day world, and I hope still to derive a good deal of pleasure from my visit to Canada by looking back upon it. It was really strange that in going out I should meet an ex-student, and in coming back there was actually an old school-friend of mine on board; she had been living with a soldier-brother in Bermuda, and we had not seen each other for nine years. We gazed at each other for about 1½ hours; I then went and enquired of one of the stewards the name of this particular lady, and we had a thoroughly good time together coming home, as neither of us were ill at all. I am very sorry to hear about Miss F. Armitage. I had so hoped to see something of her. I do hope our dear mother-lady-bird has as many pupils as she wants. The Croft, my friends, is a most ideal place, and my brother and I spent a few delightful hours there.

Yours sincerely,

DAISY HUGHES-JONES.

[From a letter sent by the brother of one of the Students.]

"BUTITI, TORO,

"VIA UGANDA MOMBASA,

"EAST AFRICA,

"SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1902.

"MY DEAR ———

"I am just where the termites or white ants most abound. This part of the country is dotted all over with the red heaps of earth filled up by the industrious little workers, but it is also too true that they have many enemies. Among these are a large species of black ants (about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long), which go out in organised bands to forage for termites. Birds love the luscious, creamy-white morsels; but man perhaps is their most deadly foe. I have lately suffered myself from ravages of termites, my tent bag and the mats on my floors having been eaten full of holes. One old church which we recently pulled down, was full of them, and they ate the woodwork in all directions. Nothing in a house is safe from them, and there is no cure, but one, viz., to burn down the house, a remedy rather worse than the disease. The natives here are very fond of one species of termites (not the destructive ones), which they catch in the following manner: In the evening they erect a little roof of reeds and grass over an ant hill, then after dark they squat down in front and hold a blazing torch just inside this little hut. The termites come swarming out and are bagged by the operator, who ties them up in bundles with plaintain fibre for sale as a delicacy. My native servants eat them just as children eat sweets in England, but I have never summoned up courage to try them. Another great treat here is grasshoppers, which are caught whenever they swarm, and are eaten fried!

"Speaking of plaintains, suggests to me to remark on the manifold uses of this tree, which is to Baganda or Batoro what the cocoa-nut palm is to some other lands. Its fruit, whether of the sweet or other kinds, is the most nourishing food that grows in the country; its leaves are used to cook food in, when new as umbrellas, to extemporise a cup or basin, and to cover up a wound instead of oil-silk; the layers of the bud as it first forms are used as feeding-cups for babies. Then the stem; this consists of layers of spongy fibre, which when green holds a quantity of water.

So a piece of this makes a nice cool wrapping for a plant or anything that requires to be shielded from the sun. Take a piece of this fibre, mash it up and beat it well and you have a good substitute for a sponge. Cut a length of stem and you have a nice smooth round mould to shape pottery on. When the fibre has dried and withered you pull it off the tree, and there you have the equivalent of brown paper in strips six inches wide and three or four feet long. Twist these up well, or shred it up and you have cord or string of any required thickness. Plait several strands together and you have a rope. These are some of the manifold uses to which the tree and its parts are put, and without the plaintain we should often be hard put to it out here for many things, in a place where we have no shops.

"But I must not only talk about the country; the work is the most important subject. I am now stationed at the capital of one of the provinces of the kingdom of Toro, taking charge of the work in four provinces, or sazas, as they are called here. My "parish" is about 80 miles by 60 in extent, and there are about 12—15 out-stations manned with native teachers. We could find stations very easily for as many more, but the Church in Toro is very young yet, and there is so much ground to be covered, while we are sending missionaries also to the neighbouring kingdoms of Bungoro and Ankole. Ought not the Church of England to be ashamed of her lethargy; here is a little native church, only six years old, sending out *and supporting* nearly 200 teachers in Toro itself, and about 20 more to the two countries mentioned, which lie north and south respectively. Yet all the centuries of the Church of England's age have not yet taught her the true wisdom of scattering abroad in order that she may increase at home. And think what this little nation is doing to evangelise others in comparison to England's huge population. As King Daudi Kasagama remarked when he heard that over 20,000 had perished in the S. African war,—'Why that would be the whole of my people!'

"We have many signs that God is blessing our work here, in the most unexpected places, often where no white man has ever been, one comes across men and women who have begun to learn, who can perhaps repeat the Lord's Prayer, and who would soon be earnest believers if a teacher could be sent to them. Minds seemingly incapable of any idea beyond daily

food, goats and shells, expand marvellously under the fertilising rays of God's Holy Spirit, and become new creatures both inwardly and outwardly. Yet these people need our prayers very sorely; heathenism still 'lurks in the thievish corners of the streets,' waiting to reclaim its victims, and temptations come with terrible force to one only lately released from the bonds of its terrible slavery. The worst horrors of the days of the old heathen kings have been swept away by the British occupation, the horrors of Kabalega, King of Bunyoro, who every time he left his house had a man killed at the doorstep that he might smear his face with the warm blood as omen of a lucky journey; the horrors of Mwanga, of which readers of the 'Gleaner' have lately been reminded by Mr. Mullin's sketch of Uganda history. These outer horrors are things of the past, but the superstition that bred them still lives in many, many a heart, lingers still in some who are baptized Christians, as we are now and again reminded by sad backslidings. Pray then for these people, that the terrors of Satan's myrmidons whom once they worshipped, may no longer possess them; that those who come for baptism may know Jesus in their heart of hearts as the one true Saviour and Friend; that those who are appointed to lead and teach their fellow Christians may be filled with the Spirit.

"Yours sincerely,

"A. L. K."

NATURE STUDY.

The following letter from Mr. Bennett deserves the thanks of all students who keep up their interest in Nature work. Mr. Bennett is doing us a very great honour indeed in consenting to be our referee, as he has a great reputation and is an enthusiast. I hope we shall not trouble him with frivolous questions, but do our best to further his researches as to the distribution of our English Flora.

"To Miss HODGSON.

"5, ELDRIDGE ROAD,

"CROYDEN.

"DEAR MADAM,

"As I wrote Miss Geldart, I shall be at all times pleased to identify any British plants for you or any of your friends or students, &c.

"I cannot hope to supply Mr. Geldart's place, as such men are rare; but I will do my best to assist in any way in any Botanical matter.

"I am particularly interested in the flora of East Anglia—the Fen and Broad flora; and have been making notes on the decreasing species of our flora for some years, with a view (some day!) of an Historical Account of our Flora; but time is short, and there is so much to do with the Life Histories of nearly all our British species, that one feels it is so little one can do.

"Yes, I should like to see the Nature Note Books you name.

"Some day, if you can spare time, you might let me have a London catalogue marked with the British Plants you want, as my own collection is practically complete, wanting only a few varieties, and I have many duplicates which it is always a real pleasure to dispose of.

"I ought to say I do not profess to know other than flowering plants. I have never had time to work at Cryptogams, so beautiful as some of them are—as the mosses.

"I am also particularly interested in the distribution of our flora, and if any of your students, &c., can send examples not hitherto found in that county I shall be much gratified.

"Yours truly,

"A. BENNETT."